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THE TRAVELS OF IBN BAṬṬŪṬA
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CHAPTER X

Sind and North-Western India

IN the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate and 93
the Blessing and Peace of God be upon our lord Muḥammad, and his House, and his Companions.

The shaikh Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad, son of ‘Abdallāh, son of Muḥammad, son of Ibrāhīm, of the tribe of Luwāta, of the city of Tangier, known by the name of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (God’s mercy upon him) related as follows:

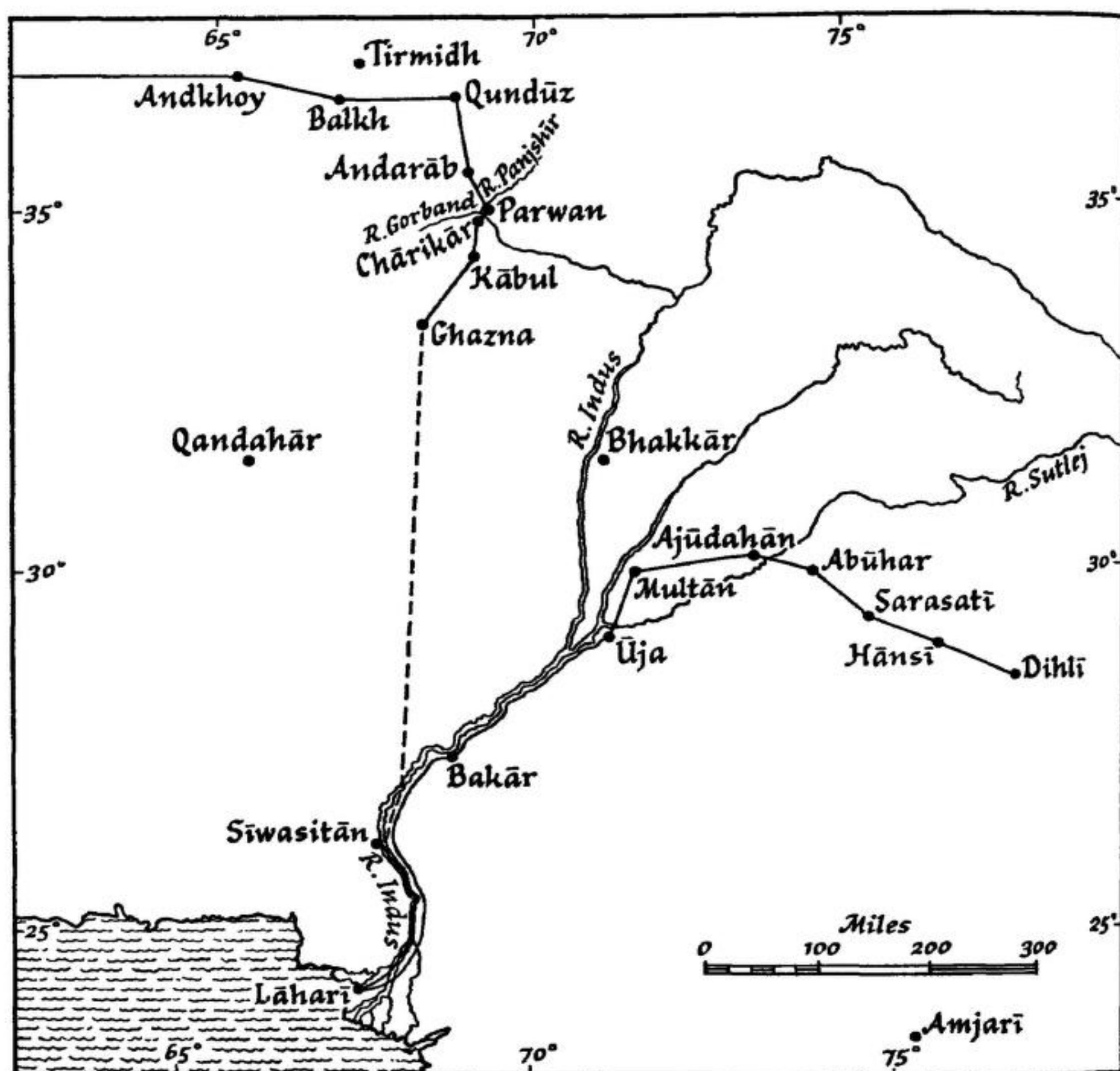
On the day of the new moon of the holy month of Muḥarram, the first day of the year 734, we came to the river of Sind called Banj Āb, which means ‘the Five Waters’. This is one of the greatest rivers on earth. It rises in flood in the hot season, and the inhabitants of that country sow at the time of its flood, just as the people of Egypt do during the Nile flood. This river is the frontier | of the territories 94
of the exalted Sultan Muḥammad Shāh, king of Hind and Sind.¹

When we reached this river the officials of the intelligence service who are charged with that duty came to us and wrote a report about us to Quṭb al-Mulk, the governor of the city of Multān.² The chief of the amīrs of Sind at this time was one of the Sultan’s mamlūks, named Sartīz. He is the inspector-general of the mamlūks, and all the Sultan’s troops parade before him for review.³ His name means ‘the Sharp-

¹ For Sultan Muḥammad b. Tughluq, see chap. XII below. The distinction between Hind and Sind (whose name is derived from the Sanskrit name of the Indus, Sindhu) derives, for Muslim writers, from the fact that Sind, having been conquered by the Arabs in 712, constituted a province of the Islamic Empire from that time, whereas India was first invaded by Maḥmūd of Ghazna (see p. 589 above) in the eleventh century.

² See p. 605 below.

³ See p. 563 above. The latter phrase seems to define precisely the significance of his title.



2. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's itineraries in Afghanistan, Sind and the Punjab

and made vast profits, and it became an established usage amongst them. On reaching Sind I followed this practice and bought horses, camels, white slaves and other goods from the merchants. I had already bought in Ghazna from an 'Irāqī merchant, a man from Takrīt by the name of Muḥammad al-Dūrī, about thirty horses and a camel with a load of arrows, for this is one of the things presented to the Sultan. This merchant went off to Khurāsān and on returning later to India received his money from me. He made an enormous profit through me and became one of the principal merchants. I met him many years later, in the city of Aleppo, when the infidels had robbed me of everything I possessed, but I received no kindness from him. |

100 *Description of the Rhinoceros.* After crossing the river of Sind called Banj Āb, we entered a forest of reeds, following the track which led through the midst of it, when we were confronted by a rhinoceros. In appearance it is a black animal with a huge body and a disproportionately large head. For this reason it has become the subject of a proverb, as the saying goes *Al-karkaddan rās bilā badan* (rhinoceros, head and no torso). It is smaller than an elephant but its head is many times larger than an elephant's. It has a single horn between its eyes, about three cubits in length and about a span in breadth. When it came out against us one of the horsemen got in its way; it struck the horse which he was riding with its horn, pierced his thigh and knocked him down, then went back into the thicket and we could not get at it. I saw a rhinoceros a second time on this road after the hour of afternoon prayer. It was feeding on plants but when we
101 approached it | it ran away. I saw a rhinoceros yet another time when in the company of the king of India we had entered a jungle of reeds. The sultan was mounted on an elephant and we too were mounted on elephants along with him. The foot-soldiers and horsemen went in and beat it up, killed it and conveyed its head to the camp (*maḥalla*).

After two days' march from [the crossing of] the river of Sind we reached the town of Janānī, a large and fine town on the bank of the river Sind.¹⁰ It has beautiful bazaars and has

¹⁰ Janānī no longer exists and is apparently not mentioned elsewhere. From this description it lay somewhat to the north of Sehwan but its

placed in a tent near the tent of 'Ain al-Mulk, who used to go to visit them and sit with them and then return to his prison.

In the afternoon of the day of the rout the Sultan gave orders to release the lower orders of those who were with 'Ain al-Mulk, such as muleteers, pedlars, slaves and persons of no importance. The 'king' Ibrāhīm al-Banjī, whom we have
 354 mentioned, was brought in, and the 'king of the army', | the malik Nuwā, said 'O Master of the World, kill this man for he is one of the rebels.' The vizier replied 'He has ransomed himself by the leader of the rising,' so the Sultan pardoned him and set him free to go back to his own country. After the sunset prayer the Sultan took his seat in the wooden tower and sixty-two of the principal associates of the rebel were brought in. Then the elephants were brought and these men were thrown down in front of them, and they started cutting them in pieces with the blades placed on their tusks and throwing some of them in the air and catching them, and all the time the bugles and fifes and drums were being sounded. 'Ain al-Mulk too was standing watching their slaughter, and parts of them were thrown at him, then he was taken back to his prison.

The Sultan remained near the river-crossing for some days owing to the multitude of the troops and the small number of boats. He sent over his personal effects and his treasures upon the elephants, and distributed elephants to his chief courtiers
 355 to send over their effects. | He sent me one of those elephants on which I sent over my baggage.

The Sultan then went, taking us with him, to the city of Bahrāyij,²⁷ a fine town on the bank of the river Sarū, which is a great stream with a strong current. The Sultan crossed it in order to visit the tomb of the pious shaikh, the warrior Sālār 'Ūd [Mas'ūd]²⁸ who made the conquest of most of these territories. There are wonderful stories told of him and celebrated expeditions.

There was such a crowding and scrambling of people for the crossing that a large vessel sank with about 300 souls, not

²⁷ Bahrāyij was a town on the river Ganges.

²⁸ The title of Sālār 'Ūd is the name of Mas'ūd al-Ghāzī who died in 557 (1162) in the war with the Hindus. Another account is that he was born in 1013 and was killed at Bahrāyij in 1033.

one of whom escaped except one Arab of the party of Amīr Ghadā. We ourselves had embarked in a small boat and God Most High delivered us. The Arab who escaped from drowning was called Sālim ['safe'] which is a strange coincidence. He had intended to mount with us into our boat but he found that we had already | started to cross the river so he took his ³⁵⁶ place in the boat which was sunk. When he came out the people thought that he was with us and there was great alarm amongst our companions and the rest of the people, imagining that we were drowned, and then when they saw us afterwards they rejoiced at our safety.

We visited the tomb of the saint whom I have mentioned, situated in a pavilion which we were unable to enter because of the multitude of the press. It was on that journey that we entered a thicket of canes and a rhinoceros came out of them against us. It was killed and the man brought its head, and though it is smaller in size than an elephant yet its head is many times bigger than an elephant's head. We have mentioned this animal in a previous passage.²⁹

Account of the Sultan's return to his capital and the rebellion of 'Alī Shāh Kar. When the Sultan was victorious over 'Ain al-Mulk, as we have related, he returned to his capital after an absence | of two and a half years. He pardoned 'Ain al- ³⁵⁷ Mulk, and pardoned also Nuṣra Khān, who had revolted in the province of Tiling, and set them both to a common task, namely the supervision of the Sultan's gardens, and furnished them with robes and horses and fixed for them a daily allowance of flour and meat.

News was received after that that one of the associates of Quṭlū Khān namely 'Alī Shāh Kar (Kar means 'deaf'), had revolted against the Sultan. He was a gallant man of fine figure and character, and having taken possession of Badrakūt he made it the capital of his kingdom. The troops went out against him and on the Sultan's orders his preceptor [Quṭlū Khān] went out to engage him in battle with large forces. He besieged him in Badrakūt, and when its towers were mined and the rebel's position became desperate he requested a promise of security and Quṭlū Khān gave it to him and sent him to the Sultan in chains. The Sultan pardoned him | and ³⁵⁸

²⁹ See p. 596.